

Agenda Item: Item 3
Meeting Date: November 16, 2006

Science Program Update

Science Program Staff

The Science Program is currently supported by the Lead Scientist and 13 staff members. The program is in the process of filling two additional positions, a Staff Environmental Scientist and a Research Writer. We recently conducted interviews for these positions and expect to have the new staff on board before the end of 2006. Donna Podger, our performance measures coordinator, has left the program. Elizabeth Soderstrom from the Natural Heritage Institute (NHI) is our new performance measures coordinator, working part-time under an interjurisdictional agreement.

Science Program Recent Activities

CALFED Science Conference 2006

The 4th Biennial CALFED Science Conference was held October 23-25, 2006 at the Sacramento Convention Center. The conference, centered around the theme "Making Sense of Complexity: Science in a Changing Environment", was a great success with 1200 attendees involved with three days of oral presentations and over 180 poster presentations. High priority issues addressed were Pelagic Organism Decline, Mercury, Invasive Species, Climate Change, and Wetland Restoration. Brief 3-5 bullet summaries of the main issues and lessons learned from each presentation, "Presentations at a Glance," will be posted on the Science Conference website by mid January 2007.

2006 Science Program Focused Proposal Solicitation Package

The 2006 Focused Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP) closed at the end of August 2006. The program received proposals for 35 research projects on the following topics:

- Environmental water – 8 proposals
- Aquatic invasive (Exotic) species – 7 proposals
- Trends and patterns of populations and system response to a changing environment – 9 proposals
- Habitat availability and response to change – 11 proposals

The 35 proposals are requesting \$24 million total funding. About \$6 million is available. The Technical Synthesis Panel met November 14-15, 2006. A public comment period

on the panel's recommendations will begin in late November and funding recommendations will be brought to the California Bay-Delta Authority at their December 14, 2006 meeting. Work on grant agreements for successful proposals will begin following Resources Agency approval. Additional information including applicants and executive summaries can be found at http://science.calwater.ca.gov/psp/psp_package_2006.shtml

CALFED Science Fellows Program

The program has selected 2 pre-doctoral and 8 post-doctoral fellow projects from the 2006 CALFED Science Fellows Program solicitation. The solicitation requested applications for projects addressing the priority topics identified in the 2006 Science Program PSP as well as agency-identified targeted questions for EWA, drinking water quality, and pelagic organism decline (POD). Please see Attachment 1 for information on 2006 Science Fellows and projects. For additional information on the CALFED Science Fellows Program visit:

<http://www.csgc.ucsd.edu/EDUCATION/CALFED/CALFEDIndx.html>

California Sea Grant State Fellows Program

The CALFED Science Program will soon be hosting a California Sea Grant State Fellow. This program provides a unique educational opportunity for graduate students who are interested both in environmental resources and in the policy decisions affecting those resources. The program matches highly motivated and qualified graduate students with "hosts" in the California State agencies for a 9-month paid fellowship in Sacramento.

2006 EWA Review

The Science Program, in collaboration with implementing agency scientists, is organizing a comprehensive review of the Environmental Water Account. This event will be held in the CALFED Bay Delta Program offices in Sacramento, November 28-30, 2006. Focus of the 2006 Review will be on the contribution of the EWA and other environmental water programs to protecting and restoring delta smelt, Chinook salmon, and steelhead in the San Francisco estuary and watershed, developing plans for science needs and water allocation priorities for EWA Year 7, and identifying science components and water allocation strategies for a possible future environmental water program. For more information on EWA and the upcoming review, see the EWA Workshops webpage: <http://science.calwater.ca.gov/workshop/ewa.shtml>.

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